

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

STEMMING THE SPREAD OF CARGO THEFT

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, billions and billions of dollars are sapped from our economy each year by cargo theft. It is a staggering problem, and, at the same time, a problem that really no one is aware of.

Every day, millions of cargo carrying trucks transport their contents across the highways of our districts. And, every day, millions of dollars of goods are stolen from these trucks, often times with violent results.

Mr. Speaker, this week I will introduce legislation that will seek to address the growing tide of cargo theft in hopes of bringing awareness of this problem to the national spotlight.

With the prevalence of cargo theft today, insurance companies have placed a heavy burden on the trucking industry. The costs associated with investigation, insurance payments, are only exacerbating what is already an industry crisis.

Typical targets for cargo theft often include shipments of clothing, prescription drugs, computers and jewelry. A truckload of computer microprocessors can be worth millions of dollars. A single pallet of pharmaceuticals, another common target, can be worth upwards of \$2 million dollars, and cargo containers are capable of carrying dozens of such pallets.

The high value-to-volume ratio of these goods has encouraged criminals previously involved in drug dealing to move into this area of activity, where they run less risk of detection and suffer less severe penalties if they are caught. The National Cargo Security Council reported that cargo worth \$12 billion is stolen in the United States every year, and yet the penalties for cargo theft are lower than those for selling drugs.

Cargo thieves employ creative means to prey on cargo carriers and have managed to stay one step ahead of authorities. Thieves know what they want and where they can find it, striking cargo containers at ports and at trains and 18-wheelers.

Thieves will either roll the dice, stealing containers with unknown contents, or they will go as far as camping outside of distribution centers. This method is called "full load truck theft." It involves monitoring shipments out of distribution centers that are known for putting out expensive goods. The thieves will then follow the trucks in rental cars waiting for the right time to pounce. This will often

occur at truck rest stops, where the driver leaves the vehicle. The process can amazingly take but a few minutes. These professional criminals are usually licensed truck drivers, who can hot wire a truck quickly and efficiently.

The legislation that I have proposed will seek to finally give both lawmakers and law enforcement officials the tools they need to combat this growing crime. Cargo theft does not receive the attention it deserves because very little concrete information exists today concerning this problem. There currently is no all-inclusive database that collects, contains or processes distinct information and data concerning cargo theft. My bill would require the creation of such a database that will allow State and local law enforcement officials to coordinate reports of cargo theft, helping them prove to lawmakers just how severe this problem really is.

Also, after speaking with officials in my Congressional District, it has become clear to me that stricter criminal penalties are needed in order to keep criminals from turning to cargo theft. My bill does just this, requiring that the United States Sentencing Commission determine what sentencing enhancement must be made.

Finally, this legislation would ensure that cargo theft reports would be reflected as a separate category in the Uniform Crime Reporting System, the data collection system used by the FBI. Currently no such category exists, resulting in ambiguous data and the inability to track and monitor trends.

Mr. Speaker, Members in this Chamber need to be aware of this problem, a problem not only specific to the large port cities of this country, but a problem specific to all Congressional districts. Flowing up and down I-75, through the heart of my district, thieves transport goods to and from Miami. Billions of dollars are being sapped from our economy, and this body is doing little to stop it. It is time that we get aggressive and make our highways safe again for commerce.

This body must make an example of cargo thieves. We must let them know that they will not get away with merely a slap on the hand. And as sheriff's departments begin integrating special cargo theft task forces, we must arm them with the ability to prosecute criminals with stiffer penalties.

Mr. Speaker, my bill represents a cohesive effort backed by law enforcement and industry representatives alike. I urge Members to support this bill, in hopes of bringing acknowledgment of this fight against cargo theft at the Federal level.

With links even to terrorism, cargo theft is a problem that has flown under our radar screens for far too long. Until we strengthen these laws, this 30-year-old crime wave will persist, threatening our ports and roads and costing our economy billions of dollars.

LOOMING DIABETES EPIDEMIC CAUSING HEALTHCARE CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, the headlines shout out: "Healthcare crisis looms." "Diabetes epidemic." "Increase in childhood obesity." Solutions abound, but the one which could make a real difference, prevention, is only paid lip service. We say "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," but then we fail to reinvent our health policy to make prevention a cornerstone.

The facts are ominous, unrelenting and tell it all:

An obesity epidemic started in the early 1980s and equally impacts all age groups. Nearly one in four Americans are obese. Obesity is highly predictive of diabetes.

One in three children now being born in the United States ultimately will become diabetic.

Diabetes incidence increased 61 percent in the last decade; 76 percent for people in their thirties.

An alarming British study reported one-third of 5-year-old girls were overweight and showing signs of developing Type II diabetes, formerly called adult onset diabetes.

The Surgeon General in his December 2001 report left no doubt where we are headed. "Left unabated, overweight and obesity may soon cause as much preventable disease and death as cigarette smoking."

The healthcare costs to deal with these trends are overwhelming and unaffordable. The National Institutes of Health has estimated that diabetes costs the United States close to \$138 billion each year in direct and indirect costs. Let me repeat, \$138 billion. We cannot afford to double, triple and quadruple these costs. Even if we could find the resources, would this be a wise expenditure of our finite healthcare dollars?

Today we spend 95 percent of our healthcare dollars on treating chronic and acute illnesses, many of which could be prevented in the first place. In other cases we could at least delay the onset of disease for a number of years and provide a higher quality of life. The dollars we spend on prevention are minuscule, and we do not track the outcomes in a meaningful way.

This Nation needs a new approach to healthcare, which puts prevention front and center. The key to prevention is personal responsibility and personal action. If people are given the facts and alternatives, they can take charge of their health.

We are facing an epidemic of diabetes in New Mexico due to obesity and unhealthy lifestyles. Minority communities are disproportionately impacted. But there is hope in many of our communities, where individuals are taking charge of their health and their future.

I was in the Navajo community of Thoreau recently and saw some dynamic seniors reshaping the health of their community. These Navajo seniors knew that decades ago, when the Navajo people were leading an active life and herding their sheep and livestock and eating traditional food, there was very little disease. They remember diabetes and other modern ailments were also unheard of in the Navajo population. So with the help of the Centers for Disease Control and the University of New Mexico Preventive Health Center, they designed a menu of healthy traditional foods.

They call the regimen of regular exercise and healthier eating "The Healthy Path." The seniors are teaching younger parents and their grandchildren the benefits of these healthier foods and how to begin The Healthy Path. Word has spread, and there are now a dozen healthy path initiatives ongoing in Navajo chapter houses.

This is not rocket science. We know prevention works. We have the tests and screening to know when someone is pre-diabetic, on a path to diabetes. Doctors have known for years that regular exercise, weight loss and healthy diet will virtually eliminate Type II diabetes. Let us put this knowledge to work and create healthier individuals and communities.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God, all Your ways are just. You alone are the source of true compassion and love. We turn to You to be strengthened this week so we may accomplish the work You set before us.

By their deeds You judge all peoples. May this Congress prove to be just stewards of the resources of this Nation and worthy leaders who gain the respect of the people.

Above all and in all, guide their judgment and place prudence and practicality in their hearts. May they meet their responsibilities with fair and open debate, seeking the best means to achieve common goals.

May their work, conversations and all their efforts be dedicated to Your service and meet the needs of the least in our midst now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GUTKNECHT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

RECOGNIZING AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE FOR 50 YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate joint resolution (S.J. Res. 22) recognizing the Agricultural Research Service of the Department of Agriculture for 50 years of outstanding service to the Nation through agricultural research.

The Clerk read as follows:

S.J. RES. 22

Whereas the Agricultural Research Service is the primary research agency of the Department of Agriculture and provides the Department of Agriculture and other Federal offices with objective research that is critical to the missions of those offices;

Whereas the agricultural research conducted by the Agricultural Research Service has an enormous impact on the economic viability of agriculture in the United States and around the world;

Whereas people around the world, especially rural Americans, enjoy a higher quality of life due in part to the work of the Agricultural Research Service to expand scientific knowledge;

Whereas the Agricultural Research Service has achieved major scientific breakthroughs that have benefited farmers, ranchers, agribusiness, and consumers;

Whereas the Agricultural Research Service has made scientific discoveries and technological developments that address agricultural problems of broad scope and high national priority, ensure safe and high quality food and other agricultural products that meet nutritional needs, and maintain a quality environment and natural resource base; and

Whereas the Agricultural Research Service continues to play a vital role in maintaining

the global competitiveness and leadership of the United States in the next millennium: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress—

(1) recognizes the Agricultural Research Service of the Department of Agriculture for 50 years of outstanding service to the Nation through agricultural research; and

(2) acknowledges the promise of the Agricultural Research Service to continue to perform outstanding agricultural research in the next 50 years and beyond.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT).

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Senate Joint Resolution 22 honors the Agricultural Research Service, the primary research agency of the United States Department of Agriculture. On Wednesday, October 29, the House Committee on Agriculture reported out an identical resolution, House Joint Resolution 74.

Although ARS can trace its heritage back to early 19th century seed collection activities in the U.S. Patent Office, it was originally organized on November 2, 1953, when the USDA consolidated most of its research functions into one newly-named Agricultural Research Service.

I am very pleased to help ARS mark its 50th anniversary and to use this occasion to recognize the important contributions ARS has made to the agricultural community, as well as to our Nation.

ARS is a public institution that conducts agricultural research exclusively for the public good. ARS scientists and other employees serve the Nation in their capacity of public servants and are accountable to the American people. The research is often long-term and costly and unlikely to be undertaken by the private sector. The ARS discoveries and innovations touch the lives of every American through the food we eat, the clothes we wear, and the environment in which we all live. Those of us from rural districts see firsthand the impact of ARS research but we should all be mindful of the agency's unique contributions to the quality of life for people everywhere. This impact is far greater than anyone could have imagined 50 years ago.

To mark its five decades of public service and to look forward to the next 50 years and beyond of even greater service to this Nation, ARS will be celebrating with various events throughout the next year. In fact, in recognition of the local and national partnerships that are the foundation of much of their research, ARS has declared this a year of outreach and will hold an open house or in some other way throw open their doors at each location over the next year. With over